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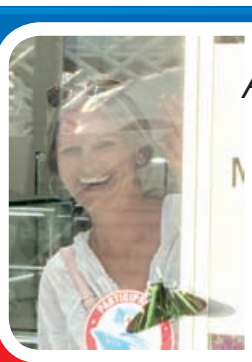

Aruba to me:
The Parkers

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People evacuate before the arrival of Hurricane Melissa in Canizo, a community in Santiago de Cuba, Tuesday, Oct. 28, 2025.

Associated Press

U.N. condemns U.S. embargo on Cuba for a 33rd year, but Washington's stand draws bit more support

By FARNOUSH AMIRI and JENNIFER PELTZ
Associated Press

UNITED NATION (AP) — The U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to condemn the U.S. economic embargo of Cuba for a 33rd year. Yet the vote, as Hurricane Melissa tore through the island nation, softened Washington's isolation on a long-standing issue in the Caribbean while new friction grows around the American military buildup there.

The vote was 165-7, with 12 abstentions. Last year, it was 187-2, with "no" votes from the United States and Israel and one abstention. This year, countries including Argentina, Ukraine and Hungary also opposed the measure. Such resolutions are not legally binding but reflect world opinion

"The United States government is satisfied to see so many countries send the regime a message that the international community will no longer tolerate" its activities, Ambassador Jeff Bartos said, after he expressed concern for Cuba and other countries in the storm's path.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Monday, Cuban Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez said the U.S. mounted a pressure campaign to influence the vote.

Rodríguez said his government had heard from other countries, mainly in Europe, that the State Department was encouraging them to vote against the resolution. The department did not respond to requests for comment, and Bartos did not address the claim after Rodríguez repeated it Wednesday in the assembly.

U.S. and Cuba face off during UN debate

Before the vote, the U.S. ambassador to the U.N., Mike Waltz, described the annual exercise as "political theater" by Cuba to "cast itself as the victim of aggression while plainly describing itself as 'the enemy of the United States.'"

"I would suggest that our member states stop appeasing the regime with their votes and instead use this vote to send the world a message," Waltz said during debate Tuesday. He said the vote also could signal to Cuba not to "blame all of its economic problems on the United States." In a taste of the sour relations between the countries, Rodríguez formally interrupted Waltz's remarks with a "point of order" to complain that they were "uncivilized, crude and gross."❑

Food aid at risk of expiring as effort to fund SNAP benefits fails in Senate

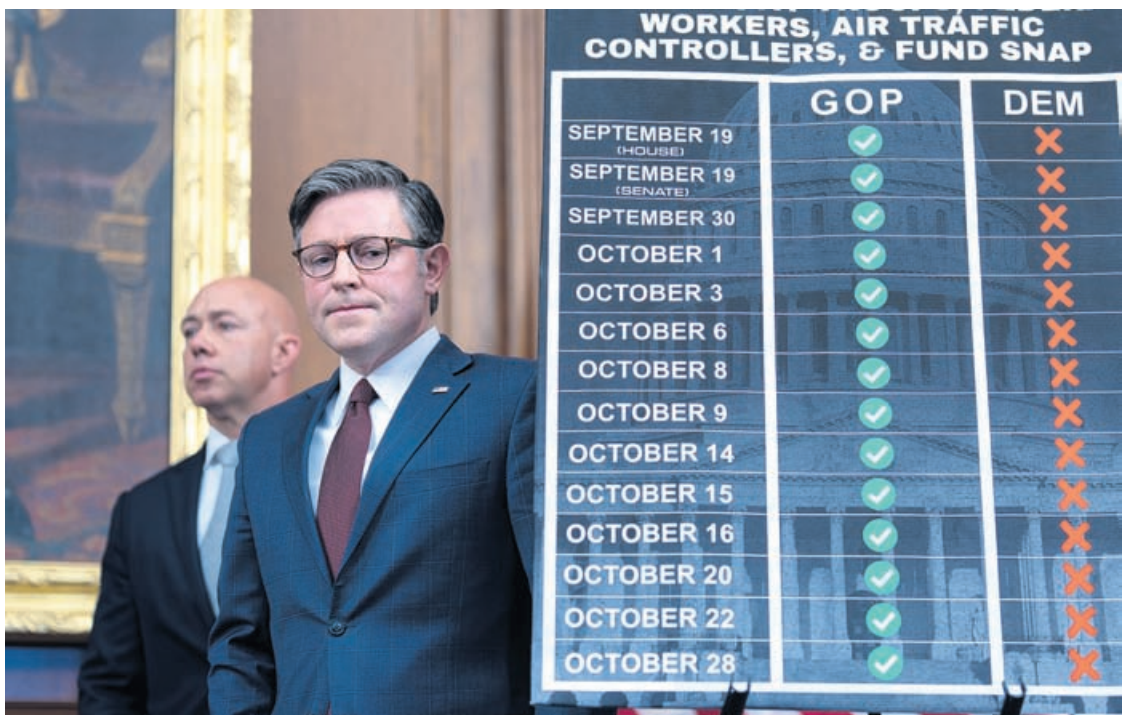
By KEVIN FREKING and MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republican leaders in Congress said it's all or nothing on Wednesday as they rejected a Democratic push to carve out food aid funding for more than 40 million Americans who stand to lose it as part of the government shutdown. Democrats have repeatedly voted against reopening the government as they demand that Republicans negotiate with them to extend expiring health care subsidies. But they pushed for expedited approval of legislation to continue funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, in the meantime. "It's simple, it's moral, it's urgent," Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said as he called for passage of the SNAP funding Wednesday.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., angrily objected to the Democratic request, calling it "a cynical attempt to provide political cover" for Democrats to continue the shutdown, now in its 29th day.

"We're not going to let them pick winners and losers," Thune said. "It's time to fund everybody."

If Democrats want to prevent damage from the shutdown, "they can end the shutdown," Thune said.



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., joined at left by Foreign Affairs Chairman Brian Mast, R-Fla., stands beside a chart tracking the votes and failures on the Republican funding bill, during a news conference on day 29 of the government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington, Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2025.

Associated Press

The increasingly pointed statements from lawmakers on Capitol Hill reflected growing frustration and pressure that is building as the SNAP deadline looms and federal workers and military service members face missed paychecks this week. Vulnerable families could see federal money dry up soon for some other programs, as well from certain Head Start preschool programs to aid for mothers to care for their newborns through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, known as WIC.

SNAP deadline looms for millions of Americans

The Department of Agriculture has posted on its website that the SNAP benefits will end Friday. "Bottom line, the well has run dry," the statement read.

Almost two dozen states have filed a lawsuit arguing that President Donald Trump's administration has the money to continue the benefits and is legally required to do so. Schumer said that SNAP benefits have never stopped during previous government shutdowns and that Trump is "picking politics over the lives of hungry kids."

Republican leaders, in turn, blamed Democrats. The solution, they said, was for Democrats in the Senate to allow for passage of their short-term funding patch that has so far failed 13 times in that chamber.

"Things are getting really tough on the American people," House Speaker Mike Johnson said on Wednesday.

Standoff, and the blame game, continues

The House has been out of session since mid-September, and Johnson is resolute that he will not bring the chamber back until the Senate has passed a bill to fund the government.

The House passed the bill Sept. 19. Senate Democrats have shown no signs publicly that they are backing away from their insistence that a government funding bill also include help for millions of Americans who purchase health insurance coverage on the exchanges established through the Affordable Care Act.

Still, Thune told reporters there's been a "higher level of conversation" with Democrats this week and that he may soon get personally involved.

But the underlying dynamics of the impasse remained the same. Thune said that he's assured the Democrats all along that they could have a vote on a bill to extend health care subsidies "as soon as they're ready to open up the government."❑

Trump administration moves to overrule state laws protecting credit reports from medical debt

By KEN SWEET
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The Trump administration is moving to overrule any state laws that may protect consumers' credit reports from medical debt and other debt issues.

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau has drafted what's known as an interpretative rule related to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, interpreting the law in a way that says the FCRA should preempt any state laws or regulations when it comes to how debt should be reported to the credit bureaus like Experian, Equifax and Trans Union.

This repeals previous Biden-era rules and regulations that allowed states to implement their own credit reporting bans. More than a dozen states like New York and Delaware prohibit the reporting of medical debt on a consumers' credit report. Medical debt is often the most disputed part of a consumer's credit report, because insurance payments can take time, and oftentimes patients do not have the means to fully pay a medical bill if insurance is not covering a procedure that has already taken place.

The three credit bureaus jointly announced in 2023 they would no longer track any medical debts below $500, which at the time the bureaus said would eliminate 70% of all medical debts reported on consumers' credit files. But some states have gone further than that. New York, Delaware and others passed laws where medical debts can no longer be reported to the credit bureaus.

The CFPB, which is largely not operating at the moment with the exception of actively repealing previous rules written under President Biden or earlier, says in its rule that Congress intended to "create national standards for the credit reporting system" under the FCRA and state laws run afoul of that intention.

The Kaiser Family Foundation estimates that Americans owe roughly $220 billion in medical debt. In Republican-controlled states like South Dakota, Mississippi, West Virginia and Georgia, roughly one in six Americans have outstanding medical debt, according to the KFF.❑

U.S. President Donald Trump arrives to meet with soldiers and servicemen at the USS George Washington at the U.S. Navy's Yokosuka base in Yokosuka, south of Tokyo, Tuesday, Oct. 28, 2025.

Associated Press

Jurors convict Illinois deputy of killing Sonya Massey but can't agree on first-degree murder charge

By JOHN O'CONNOR
Associated Press

PEORIA, Ill. (AP) — A jury on Wednesday convicted an Illinois sheriff's deputy of second-degree murder, a lesser charge, in the shooting death of Sonya Massey, a Black woman who called 911 to report a suspected prowler.

Sean Grayson could be sentenced to up to 20 years in prison or even probation. The jury did not convict him of first-degree murder, a crime that carries a sentence of 45 years to life.

Massey's supporters were angered by the result. Her father, James Wilburn, called it a "miscarriage of justice."

"She called for help and she was murdered in her own home. Second-degree murder that is not right. That is not justice for anybody's family," Teresa Haley, a civil rights activist in Springfield, Illinois, told reporters outside the courthouse.

Grayson and another deputy arrived at Massey's home in Springfield early on July 6, 2024, after she reported a prowler. He shot the 36-year-old woman after confronting her about how she was handling a pot of hot water on the stove.

Grayson and his attorneys argued that he fired his gun in fear that Massey would scald him with hot water.

Donna Massey, center right, wipes tears from her face as she listens to Rev. Al Sharpton, right, speak during a press conference over the shooting death of her daughter Sonya, who was killed by Illinois sheriff's deputy Sean Grayson, at New Mount Pilgrim Church in the Garfield Park neighborhood in Chicago, Tuesday, July 30, 2024.

Associated Press

Massey's killing raised new questions about U.S. law enforcement shootings of Black people in their homes, and prompted a change in Illinois law requiring fuller transparency on the background of candidates for law enforcement jobs.

Grayson, 31, was charged with first-degree murder, but the jury was given the option of considering second-degree murder, which can apply when a defendant faces a "serious provocation" or believes their action is justified even if that belief is unreasonable. He will be sentenced on Jan. 29.

State's Attorney John Milhiser declined to comment as he left the courtroom. He was repeatedly praised by Massey's supporters for pursuing a trial that was moved 75 miles (120.7 kilometers) north to the Peoria County courthouse because of intense publicity in Springfield.

"While we believe Grayson's actions deserved a first-degree conviction, today's verdict is still a measure of justice for Sonya Massey," the family's attorneys, Ben Crump and Antonio Romanucci, said after the seven-day trial.

Body camera video recorded by another Sangamon County sheriff's deputy at the scene, Dawson Farley, was a key part of the prosecution's case. It showed Massey, who struggled with mental health issues, telling the officers, "Don't hurt me," and repeating, "Please God."

When the deputies entered the house, Grayson saw the pot on the stove and ordered Massey to move it. Massey jumped up to retrieve the pot, and she and Grayson joked about how he said he was backing off from the "hot, steaming water." Massey then replied, "I rebuke you in the name of Jesus."

Both Grayson and Farley drew their pistols and yelled at Massey to put the pot down. Grayson told investigators he thought her "rebuke" meant she intended to kill him and, in the following commotion, fired three shots, striking Massey just below the eye.

Farley testified that Massey didn't say or do anything that caused him to view her as a threat. But under cross-examination, he acknowledged that he initially reported to investigators that he feared for his safety because of the hot water. Farley did not fire his weapon and was not charged.

Grayson, who was subsequently fired, testified in his own defense. He told jurors he noticed the bottom of the pot was red and he believed Massey planned to throw the water at him.

He said Massey's words felt like a threat and that he drew his gun because officers are trained to use force to get compliance.

"She done. You can go get it, but that's a head shot," Grayson told Farley after the shooting. "There's nothing you can do, man." ❑

British newspaper says it was duped by someone impersonating former NYC mayor Bill de Blasio

Then-New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio takes a phone call during the 14th Annual CUNY/Daily News Citizenship NOW! event, April 28, 2016, in New York.

Associated Press

By JAKE OFFENHARTZ
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The Times of London has apologized for running an article that falsely claimed former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio had criticized current Democratic candidate Zohran Mamdani. The British newspaper said it was duped by someone impersonating the ex-politician.

In a statement, the newspaper said it retracted the story containing the bogus de Blasio quotes after learning that "our reporter had been misled by an individual falsely claiming to be the former New York mayor."

The article, published just a week ahead of the closely-watched mayoral election, quickly drew attention online Tuesday evening, as de Blasio had been an early backer of Mamdani's.

De Blasio then took to X to disavow the piece as "entirely false and fabricated," adding that he "never spoke to that reporter and never said those things."

Under the headline "Zohran Mamdani Ally Bill de Blasio Says His Policies Don't Add Up," the piece quoted de Blasio as saying he had changed his view on Mamdani's agenda, which includes free buses, universal child care and a rent freeze for stabilized apartments.

The actual de Blasio said that he continues to support Mamdani, calling his vision "both necessary and achievable."

The newspaper did not elaborate on how the interview was conducted. Inquiries to the reporter were not returned.❑

The U.S. draws down troops on NATO's eastern flank as Europe frets about a security vacuum

By LORNE COOK and STEPHEN McGRATH
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — The U.S. confirmed on Wednesday that it will reduce its troop presence on NATO's borders with Ukraine but shed no light on any future cuts, as its allies worry about a security gap being created at a time when Russia is increasingly confrontational.

The news first came from Romania, whose defense minister said the decision reflects Washington's shift "toward the Indo-Pacific" region. However, Ionut Mosteanu said allied troop numbers would remain above the number before Russia's full-scale invasion of neighboring Ukraine in 2022.

The U.S. armed forces later confirmed the move, but denied it was a sign of lessened commitment to NATO. Analysts say it might tempt Russia to test the military alliance.

Depending on operations and exercises, around 80,000-100,000 U.S. troops are usually present on European soil. NATO allies have expressed concern that the Trump administration might drastically cut their numbers and leave a security vacuum as European countries confront an increasingly aggressive Russia. The administration has been reviewing its military "posture" in Europe and elsewhere, but U.S. officials have said that the findings of the review were not expected to be known before early next year.

NATO has recently been bulking up its defensive posture on its eastern flank bordering Belarus, Russia and Ukraine after a series of airspace violations by drones, balloons and Russian aircraft.

Servicemen run during the Steadfast Dart 2025 exercise, involving some 10,000 troops in three different countries from nine nations, representing the largest NATO operation planned this year, at a training range in Smardan, eastern Romania, Wednesday, Feb. 19, 2025.

Associated Press

European build-up

The Romanian defense ministry said the U.S. decision will "stop the rotation in Europe of a brigade that had elements in several NATO countries," including at a base in Romania.

It said in a statement that about 1,000 U.S. troops will remain stationed in Romania. As of April, more than 1,700 U.S. military personnel were estimated to be deployed there. A brigade usually numbers anywhere from 1,500 to 3,000 troops.

"Our strategic partnership is solid, predictable and reliable," Mosteanu said in a news conference.

In a post on X, U.S. Ambassador to NATO Matthew Whitaker said the U.S. "remains committed to Romania."

"Our strong presence in and enduring commitment to Europe remains steadfast, including support for Eastern Sentry," a NATO operation along the eastern flank, he wrote. He did not mention the troop drawdown.

After the war started in 2022, NATO bolstered its presence on Europe's eastern flank by sending additional multinational battle groups to Romania, Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia. Many more European troops are now stationed there.

The Romanian statement said the U.S. "decision also took into account the fact that NATO has strengthened its presence and activity on the Eastern Flank, which allows the United States to adjust its military posture in the region."

101st Airborne troops to fly out

In a statement later on Wednesday, U.S. Army Europe and Africa said the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division will return to its base in Kentucky as previously planned but that no other U.S. troops would rotate into Europe to replace it.

"This is not an American withdrawal from Europe or a signal of lessened commitment to NATO and Article 5," it said, in a reference to the collective security guarantee in the organization's treaty that an attack on one ally should be considered an attack on all 32.

"Rather this is a positive sign of increased European capability and responsibility. Our NATO allies are meeting President Trump's call to take primary responsibility for the conventional defense of Europe," it said.

It insisted the move "will not change the security environment in Europe."

However, top Republican lawmakers overseeing the military in Congress spoke out against the move, issuing a rare rebuke of an action taken by the leader of their own party.

In a joint statement, Sen. Roger Wicker and Rep. Mike Rogers, who chair committees overseeing the U.S. military, said it "sends the wrong signal to Russia at the very moment President Trump is applying pressure to force Vladimir Putin to come to the table to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine."

Government officials in Poland and Lithuania, which lie farther north along Europe's eastern flank, said they had not been informed of any U.S. troop drawdown in their countries.

Giuseppe Spatafora, research analyst at the EU Institute for Security Studies, said that while the full extent of the American withdrawal is not yet known, "we do know the direction of travel: fewer US troops and assets, and an expectation that Europeans will fill the gap."

Asked about the move, a NATO official said that "adjustments to U.S. force posture are not unusual." Under the terms of their employment contract, the official is permitted to speak to reporters but only on condition that they not be named.

The official said that even with this new adjustment, about which NATO was informed in advance, the American "force posture in Europe remains larger than it has been for many years, with many more U.S. forces on the continent than before 2022."

The official played down any security concerns, saying that "NATO and U.S. authorities are in close contact about our overall posture to ensure NATO retains our robust capacity to deter and defend."❑

Death toll in police raid on drug gang in Rio rises 119, Brazilian police say

By DIARLEI RODRIGUES and ELÉONORE HUGHES
Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A police raid and clashes with a drug gang embedded in low-income neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro left at least 119 people dead, officials said Wednesday, a day after the massive operation drew criticism for using excessive force.

The toll of 115 suspects and four policemen killed was an increase over what authorities originally said was 60 suspects dead in Tuesday's raid by about 2,500 police and soldiers in the favelas of Penha and Complexo de Alemao.

Felipe Curi, Rio state police secretary, told a news conference that additional bodies were found in a wooded area where he said they had worn camouflage while battling with security forces. He said local residents had removed clothing and equipment from the bodies in what he said would be investigated as tampering with evidence.

"These individuals were in the woods, equipped with camouflage clothing, vests and weapons. Now many of them appeared wearing underwear or shorts, with no equipment, as if they had come through a portal and changed clothes," Curi said.

A priest blesses the bodies of people killed the day before during a police raid targeting the Comando Vermelho gang in the Complexo da Penha favela of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2025.

Associated Press

Earlier Wednesday, in the neighborhood of Penha, residents had surrounded many of the bodies collected in trucks and displayed in a main square and shouted "massacre" and "justice" before forensic authorities arrived to retrieve the remains.

The tally of suspects arrested stood at 113 up from 81 cited previously, Curi said. Earlier, the state government said 93 rifles and more than half a ton of drugs were seized.

Police and soldiers had launched the raid in helicopters, armored vehicles and on foot, targeting the Red Command gang. They drew gunfire and other retaliation from gang members, sparking scenes of chaos across the city on Tuesday.

Schools in the affected areas shuttered, a local university canceled classes, and roads were blocked with buses used as barricades.

On Wednesday morning, local activist Raull Santiago said he was part of a team in Penha that found about 15 bodies before dawn.

"We saw executed people: shot in the back, shots to the head, stab wounds, people tied up. This level of brutality, the hatred spread - there's no other way to describe it except as a massacre," Santiago said.

Rio state Gov. Claudio Castro said on Tuesday that Rio was at war against "narco-terrorism," a term that echoed the Trump administration in its campaign against drug smuggling in Latin America.

Rio's state government said that those who had been killed had resisted police.

Rio has been the scene of lethal police raids for decades. In March 2005, some 29 people were killed in Rio's Baixada Fluminense region, while in May 2021, 28 were killed in the Jacarezinho favela.

But the scale and lethality of Tuesday's operation are unprecedented. ❑

France adopts consent-based rape law in the wake of landmark Gisèle Pelicot case

By SYLVIE CORBET
Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — France's Senate gave its final approval on Wednesday to a bill defining rape and other sexual assault as any non-consensual sexual act, a move that comes after the landmark drugging and rape trial that shook France and turned Gisèle Pelicot into a global icon.

Senators voted 327-0 in favor of the bill, with 15 abstentions.

The bill was presented in January following the conviction of 51 men for the rape and abuse of Gisèle Pelicot in a case which spurred a national reckoning over rape culture in France.

Marie-Charlotte Garin and Véronique Riotton, lawmakers for the Greens and President Emmanuel Macron's centrist party, respectively, who championed the bill, wrote: "It's time to take action and take a new step forward in the fight against sexual violence."

Gisele Pelicot and her son Florian Pelicot, third left, return to the courthouse during the appeals trial in the case of a man challenging his conviction, less than a year after the landmark verdict in a drugging and rape trial that shook France Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025 in Nimes, southern France.

Associated Press

The bill states that "any non-consensual sexual act constitutes sexual assault."

Consent is defined as "freely given, informed, specific, prior and revocable" and assessed "in the light of the circumstances." The text says it "cannot be inferred solely from the silence or the lack of reaction of the victim."

The bill also specifies that there is no consent if the sexual act is committed with "violence, coercion, threat or surprise."

Last week, it was widely approved by lawmakers from almost all ranks at the National Assembly, France's lower house of parliament. The far right voted against it.

The Senate's approval is the last step before the bill becomes law via official publication.

France rejoins many other European nations that have similar consent-based laws on rape, including neighboring Germany, Belgium and Spain.

Until now, rape under French law was defined as penetration or oral sex using "violence, coercion, threat or surprise." France has taken other steps in recent years to toughen punishment for sexual misconduct, including setting 15 as the age of consent.

In December, Pelicot's ex-husband and 50 other men were convicted of sexually assaulting her between 2011 and 2020 while she was under chemical submission.❑

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort & MVC Eagle Beach Aruba continue to lead in global sustainability practices

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort & MVC Eagle Beach Retain Prestigious EarthCheck Certifications for 2025, Reaffirming Their Enduring Commitment to Sustainable Tourism

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort and its sister property, MVC Eagle Beach Aruba, have once again been recognized as global leaders in sustainable tourism through their continued partnership with EarthCheck, the world's leading business advisory group specializing in sustainability and destination management for the travel and tourism industry.

For 2025, Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort proudly retained its EarthCheck Master Certification, marking more than fifteen years of continuous dedication to environmental stewardship and sustainable operations. This recognition reaffirms the resort's position among the world's most environmentally responsible hospitality leaders.

MVC Eagle Beach Aruba also successfully retained its EarthCheck Platinum Certification, maintaining its place among an elite group of tourism operators certified to the internationally recognized EarthCheck Company Standard.

"For more than fifteen years, Amsterdam Manor and MVC Eagle Beach have set the benchmark for sustainability in the region," said Stewart Moore, CEO & Founder of EarthCheck. "Their enduring commitment to caring for people, culture, and the environment demonstrates that responsible tourism isn't just the right thing to do, it's smart, forward-thinking business. By integrating sustainability into every aspect of their operations, they continue to inspire others and lead the way toward a more resilient and regenerative tourism future."

By working with EarthCheck, Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort and MVC Eagle Beach Aruba continue to be part of a global network of tourism leaders taking meaningful steps toward addressing climate change, protecting natural assets, and ensuring a more sustainable future for the travel industry.

"We are incredibly proud to continue representing Aruba as a global example of sustainable tourism," said Jurgen van Schaijk, Owner & Managing Director of Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort and MVC Eagle Beach Aruba. "Our team's continued commitment to eco-friendly operations stems from a shared belief that we can deliver exceptional guest experiences while protecting the natural beauty and culture that make our island so special."

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort continued to make significant strides in sustainability throughout 2024, reducing its energy consumption by 7.9% per guest night and cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 9.6% per guest night compared to the previous year, according to its 2024 EarthCheck Performance Report. The resort also maintained above-average ratings in both water savings and community contributions. With water consumption reduced to 184.3 L per guest night, well below the regional average of 486.5 L, Amsterdam Manor has further strengthened its position as a global leader in sustainable hospitality.

MVC Eagle Beach also demonstrated exceptional progress, lowering potable water consumption by 2.3% per guest night. The resort achieved major improvements in its Pesticide Products Rating, increasing from one to four stars, and in its Paper Products Rating, which elevated from two to five stars, according to its 2024 EarthCheck Performance Report. The resort continues to exceed regional averages across multiple key metrics including energy efficiency, emissions reduction and waste management, reinforcing its strong commitment to environmental stewardship and responsible operations.

Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort is also enhancing the guest experience through ongoing renovations and upgrades. The resort is currently remodeling its Manor Studios, located in the three-story entrance building, with expanded layouts, fully renewed interiors featuring stylish décor, and a refreshed exterior façade that complements the property's signature ambiance. Additionally, a new porte-cochère will offer a more welcoming arrival experience, while convenient shower rooms will be introduced for guests with early arrivals or late departures.❑

Know more about the Town Hall Eloy Arends building

The Monuments bureau shares some essential facts about the Town Hall known as the Eloy Arends building. The aim is to educate the community about the mansion's construction, history, and preservation.

The Doctor Eloy Arends building is located at the Wilhelminastraat 8 and was the home of the Arends family. It was the first building that the Monuments bureau, and the Government of Aruba, restored in 1997. Mr. Medardo 'Dada' Picus, was the architect of this Aruban-Caribbean building. The building sits on a 1.545 m² plot of land and is a typical Aruban mansion. It is an open home with false walls that allow the connection of the rooms with each other.

The entrance has large doors and columns supporting the floor of the upper balcony. In between the columns, there are decoration details made out of wood. The elaborately detailed embellishment is known as gingerbread trim and the triangular decorative wall surface over the columns is called the tympanum.

The top of the doors and windows have stained glass.

The building is not built on ground level but at approximately 1.5 meters above ground level. This mansion elevation created storage below the wooden floors and allowed proper ventilation.

The building has lots of windows which allow plenty of light inside, as well as good ventilation.

It has dormer windows and crowns on the outside part of the roof and different decorations on the edges of the walls and facade.

This is a stunning building full of beautiful details that resemble its beauty and transform into a history of love. Aruban tradition for "well-to-do" families dictates that before a man gets married, he has to present his future wife with a newly built and fully furnished house. It was certainly the case with this building.

Due to the engagement between Eloy Arends and Monica Lacle (daughter of Adriaan Lacle, who is mainly known for the boulevard that bears his name), the construction of the mansion began in 1922 and was completed in 1925 when the couple got married.

The Office of the Civil Registry is located in the adjacent building, whereas the mansion hall is used exclusively for civil wedding ceremonies.

The Monuments bureau will continue to contribute and educate the community about the history of our monuments with significant value for Aruba.❑

The legend of the Kibrahacha tree

ORANJESTAD—The Kibrahacha is a famous tree known locally for its bright, yellow flowers that blooms for just three days. Scientifically known as Tabebuia billbergii, and in English as the Yellow Poui, this tree is native to the Caribbean islands of Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao, and is considered among locals as one of the most spectacular trees on the island. But did you also know that the beautiful yellow flowers have a story behind them?

The Kibrahacha is said to have extremely hard wood—so hard that it can break an axe. In fact, that's what its name means in Papiamento: "kibra" (break) "hacha" (axe). The flowers bloom around April and May, but this only last for about three days, as the flowers start to fall off and the tree starts growing its green leaves. The Kibrahacha is especially particular, as it's the only one among its neighboring trees to starts blooming first.

The legend of the Kibrahacha

Written by Hubert (Lio Booi)

One day Aterima, who lived west of the hill Sero Warawara, woke up one day to find her father sleeping in his hammock, suffering a bout of terrible fever. Her mother was very worried, and as was the custom in the olden days, asked Aterima to go fetch Kudawecha, who was a epistemophile, to come see his father.

Aterima wasted to time and went to go fetch Kudawecha. Upon telling Kudawecha that her father was sick, he immediately accompanied Aretima back to her hut, where he encountered her father in a bad state. Not willing to waste any time, he told Aretima that the only thing that can cure her father is a home-made potion made out of the Kibrahacha flower. At the time the Kibrahacha was not yet in her blooming season, but the stubborn Kudawecha was determined to bring back Aretima's father back to health, and so off they went to the nearest Kibrahacha tree.

When they arrived at the tree, they saw that it was covered head to toe in thorns, with only a few closed flowers at the very top. Kudawecha, experienced veteran in all things Aruban flora and fauna, told Aretima to start plucking the thorns of the tree to climb to the top where the flowers are. Aretima, just as determined to save her father, didn't hesitate to start.

To her surprise, every time she plucked a thorn of the tree, a bright, yellow flower bloomed in its place. The thorns were hard to pluck out, but Aretima continued plucking with enthusiasm and wonder at the unfolding sight before her. Not too long after she was able to fill her entire satchel with the yellow flowers.

Kudawecha, satisfied to see Aretima so happy and encouraged to help her father, took her back to her hut.

Upon arriving back at the hut, Aretima's mother quickly made a tea out of

the flowers and gave it to her sick husband. Miraculously, after just one sip of the tea, the father's fever left his body immediately, and he opened eyes and sprung up feeling new.

The next morning, they all visited the same Kibrahacha tree that saved the life of Aretima's father and they saw another miracle. The tree was covered again in the same bright, yellow flowers, with not a thorn in sight. And as the legend goes, from that day on, the Kibrahacha tree no longer produced any more thorns.❑

Feeling parched?

Grab refreshment by the side of the road!

(Oranjestad)—Touring the island in the blistering heat can leave one feeling rather thirsty and looking to cool off. Luckily there are a few stands along the roads of Aruba that can offer you just what you need: a nice, refreshing beverage!

These "coconut stands" can be found at several locations on the island, where you can cool off with delicious smoothies, drinks, snacks, and of course, fresh coconuts! Perfect during family outings around the island, these stands can be found in the following locations:

- Near the red Anchor in San Nicolas
- On the Linear Park in Oranjestad (in front of airport runway)
- At the California Light House hill
- Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin
- Bushiribana Beach (Near the Ling & Song Supermarket)

Visit the island's hidden natural pools

(Oranjestad)—Amongst the countless beaches surrounding the island that are well-known and frequently visited, there are an additional two "hidden" natural pools that are situated in the northern coast of the island, two ideal stops in your tour itinerary.

Conchi (Natural Pool)

For many years, Conchi was the only natural pool that we had on the island. Located in the Arikok National Park, near Boca Keto and the Daimari Ranch, Conchi—also known "Cura di Turtuga (Turtle's Cove) or just Natural Pool—is reachable with any 4×4 vehicle or by foot if you're up for a long hike. However, since it is part of the National Park, you must first get permission from park management to enter. You would have to purchase a day pass, and receive a wristband as proof of payment. Once you've completed that, you are set!

If you decide to hike from the entrance of the Arikok National Park, this is also possible: do bring plenty of protective clothing and enough water and food—it could take you up to three hours to hike there!

However, when you eventually do get there, you will be greeted with crystal blue water surrounded by a natural rock formation that protects you from the wild waves on the other side. Though the pool is located on the northern side of the island (where the sea is largely rough and largely no suitable for swimming), the pool itself is very calm. It's also relatively deep, and you can climb up the rocks and jump in!

Cave Pool

This relatively new pool appeared just a few years ago, when a part of the dried up coral cliff floor broke off and created a partition between the ocean and what is now the natural pool that is hidden there. Because it's still so new, there is no official name for it, but most people just call it the cave pool.

Just like the Conchi, the new natural pool is situated on the northern coast of Aruba. However, this pool is much easier to reach with any type of vehicle, and there is no hiking needed. This spot has also become a regular stop for touring visitors.

When you get there, maybe you won't be able to spot the pool immediately, because you will probably notice the moon-shaped lagoon where wild northern waves crash into each other. Sounds scary, but if you look down on your right, you'll see a calm, crystal blue little pool in the corner. To get there, you have to climb down some stairs. Be careful when climbing down and follow the instructions of your tour guide if you have one.

And just like Conchi, this pool also has a jumping spot, and a rope to climb back up the boulder.❑

Picture of cave pool is credited to RockaBeach Tours

Aruba to me: The Parkers

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ……. Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.
Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Keith & Amber Parker from Orlando, Florida.
They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is a haven for rare visitors - both people and wings. While shopping in the Renaissance Hotel, we were surprised by a dazzling green-banded moth that had apparently come all the way from the Amazon region of South America. We confirmed with the Butterfly Farm that it is a Urania Leilus moth, and a very rare find in Aruba. They said it could have been blown here from a storm. In adult form, they only live 7-10 days, making it an even rarer sight.
My wife, Amber, decided to photo bomb the moth while I was outside taking pictures of it."
Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!❑

ARUBA TODAY

Keeping up with the conniving spider…

Nanzi fools Cha Tiger

Many years ago, Cha* Tiger did not live in the mondi*, but among civil society. Back then, he was feared by everyone. When he walked past in a halfway, everyone around would make room immediately, that's how ferocious he was.

One night a group of friends was hanging out and they were talking about Cha Tiger. "You know, that tiger sure is incredibly strong and I don't trust him one bit. He probably eats a lot too. Oh, I'm so scared of him!" one person said.

"Oh, don't be stupid! What can Cha Tiger do? He's all bark and no bite, that's it. I certainly am not afraid of him. I bet you guys that I could even sit on his back like I would any donkey." It was Nanzi who said this. The people around him laughed at his remarks, thinking how silly it was for him to say such things.

"You, Nanzi? You are such a liar! He'll stomp you into next Tuesday, stop saying such nonsense."

"I'm not lying!" Nanzi defended himself. "He'll take me all the way to Shon Arei*."

The next morning, Shon Arei already knew of what Nanzi had been saying about Cha Tiger. He was really curious to see if Nanzi was brave enough to put his money where his mouth is. Cha Tiger walked past.

"Hey, Cha Tiger!" someone called to him. He growled at the person. "Hey, Cha Tiger! Listen!"

"Nanzi made fun of you, said he wasn't afraid of you at all! Said he could sit on your back and that you weren't as strong as we think you are."

Cha Tiger stopped dead in his tracks, furious. "Well, I'll set him straight!" Cha Tiger ran toward Nanzi's house, prepared to teach Nanzi a painful lesson. The entire way there he was growling and yelling, making everyone around aware what was going to happen. They all ran inside and peaked through the blinds to see the fight that was going to unfold.

Nanzi also heard Cha Tiger's screams, slowly getting closer and closer. He was terrified. His face turned pale, and his teeth started chattering like someone with a high fever. Sweat was dripping down his forehead.

When Cha Tiger arrived at Nanzi's place, he stormed in and saw Nanzi's frail body lying face down in the corner. "Hey, how are you, Cha Tiger?" Nanzi asked, his voice trembling. "I Heard you were making fun of me in front of your little friends, so I came to hear from your own mouth what you have to say to me," Cha Tiger retorted, still fuming.

"Me? Talk bad about you?" Nanzi chuckled nervously. "People are such liars, I swear. Can't you see how sick I am here?" Nanzi took a pause, like someone who couldn't breathe properly. In his case of course, it was probably from extreme fear. "Shi Maria* wanted to take me to Shon Arei, where someone can heal me from my illness." Still wrapped up in his act, Nanzi turned back face down. "Me, a father of nine little children…"

Cha Tiger was shocked. Nanzi looked absolutely terrible, God knows he was dying.

"Cha Tiger, you're strong. Could you put me on your back and take me to Shon Arei, I can barely walk," Nanzi pleaded. Cha Tiger took pity on the spider and agreed to do this favor. Nanzi climbed on the tiger's back, letting his body fall down and grabbing on to Cha Tiger's neck. "Would you mind putting a rope in your mouth so I can hold on? That way I can sit up straight," Nanzi asked. Cha Tiger growled in reluctance but said OK. And so they made their way to Shon Arei.

Once they started traveling through the mondi, Nanzi turned to Cha Tiger and said: "These mosquitos are so annoying! Cha Tiger, do you mind if I cut a piece of branch so I can keep these mosquitos away?" Cha Tiger let him take his branch.

Eventually they made it out the mondi to where everyone else was. Nanzi immediately perked up and whacked Cha Tiger with his branch, making the tiger jump. He ran all the way to Shon Arei's castle. Exhausted, he plumped down in front of His Majesty.

"See, Shon Arei? Cha Tiger ain't nothing but a big donkey!" Nanzi said proudly. Everyone around cheered: "Hurray, Nanzi!" Poor Cha Tiger was so embarrassed that he was fooled by the conniving spider, and so he ran into the mondi to hide. To this day, it's said that the tiger still hides away in the mondi.

Cha: Nickname placed in front of someone's name and can mean anything, like friend. However, it often has negative connotations first.

Mondi: dry wooded areas found on the ABC islands.

Shon Arei: The King

Shi Maria: Nanzi's wife.❑

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto.

Taste the natural flavors of Aruba

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year- round.

Konkomber chikito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Konkomber chikito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year- round.

Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year- round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture–more so than snap beans–and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pompuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups.❑

CROSSWORD

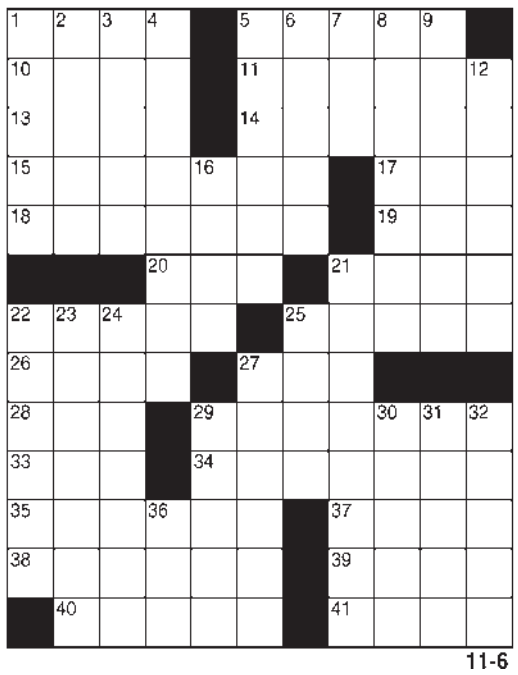
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

1 Make finer, as flour
5 European viper
10 One of the Great Lakes
11 Less tight
13 Animal abodes
14 Small
15 "What happened next?"
17 Lend a hand
18 Monetary reserve
19 Eastern "way"
20 Purpose
21 Painter Magritte
22 Pretentious people
25 Nuisances
26 Easy gait
27 — Angeles
28 Poem of praise
29 Groom's friend
33 Rifle or revolver
34 Way back when
35 Region of eastern France
37 Color
38 Impulse relayer
39 Addition column
40 Forgo frugality
41 Mexican coin

DOWN

1 Car type
2 Adler who bested Sherlock Holmes
3 Locates
4 Lab vessel
5 State without proof
6 Carrying out
7 Period
8 Fancy homes
9 Dependent
12 Gives a makeover
16 Pianist Myra
21 Truckers' haven
22 Ad catchphrase
23 Lumps
24 Becomes chatty
25 Do some modeling
27 Map key
29 Strips for breakfast
30 Bangor's state
31 Dance's de Mille
32 "That's a lie!"
36 Verb for you



11-6

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

11-6 **CRYPTOQUOTE**

UDW SUD'V GIUBE GCSCDCVEIV SI ... UDG BEIYIKJYI DITIY VIDG BJ ADJZ KJY ZEJS BEI XIRR BJRRV; CB BJRRV KJY BEII. — LJED GJDDI

Cryptoquote: YOU HAVE TO EAT OATMEAL OR YOU'LL DRY UP. ANYBODY KNOWS THAT. — KAY THOMPSON

Cruise ship Schedule: Nov. 2 - 8 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
SUN	02	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	04	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	05	EMERALD PRINCESS	09.00	18.00	B	1
		CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	08.00	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SAT	08	ROYAL CLIPPER	09.00	18.00	C	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

2		5		7	1			
	7			2				
	9					3		
			2					
	1				7	5		9
7	4		1	9			2	
			8		2			1
6			3					8
9							3	6

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/30

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Answer to previous puzzle

4	6	9	3	8	1	2	5	7
7	8	5	4	2	9	1	6	3
3	2	1	5	6	7	8	4	9
5	3	7	8	1	6	4	9	2
2	4	8	7	9	5	3	1	6
9	1	6	2	4	3	7	8	5
8	9	3	1	5	2	6	7	4
6	7	4	9	3	8	5	2	1
1	5	2	6	7	4	9	3	8

Difficulty: ★★★ 10/29

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AI chipmaker Nvidia is the first $5 trillion company

People take a look to Nvidia''s new products during the Computex 2025 exhibition in Taipei, Taiwan, Wednesday, May 21, 2025.

Associated Press

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

Nvidia has become the first $5 trillion company, just three months after the Silicon Valley chipmaker was first to break through the $4 trillion barrier.

Hitting the new benchmark puts more emphasis on the upheaval being unleashed by an artificial intelligence craze that's widely viewed as the biggest tectonic shift in technology since Apple co founder Steve Jobs unveiled the first iPhone 18 years ago. Apple rode the iPhone's success to become the first publicly traded company to be valued at $1 trillion, $2 trillion and eventually, $3 trillion.

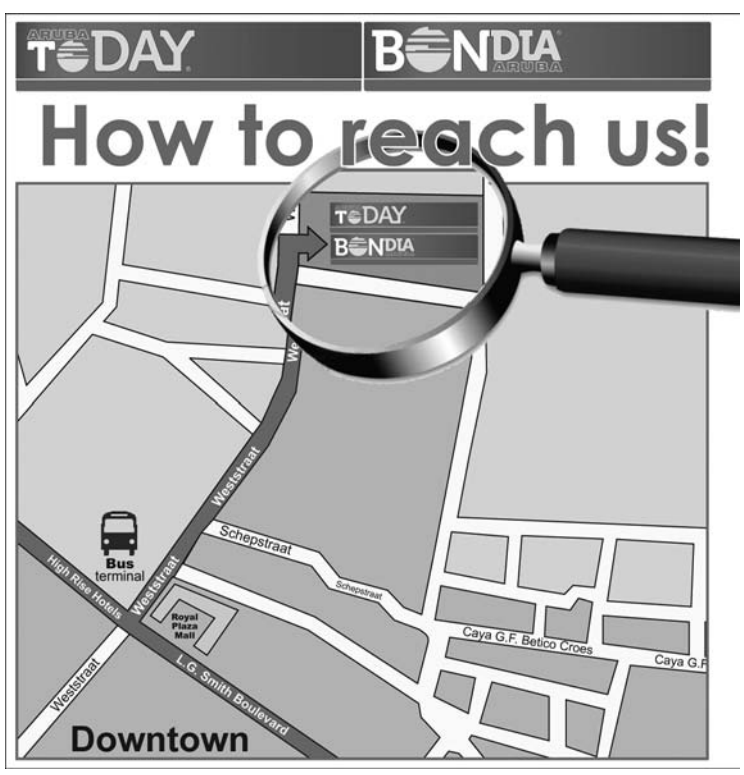
But there are concerns of a possible AI bubble, with officials at the Bank of England earlier this month flagging the growing risk that tech stock prices pumped up by the AI boom could burst. The head of the International Monetary Fund has raised a similar alarm.

The ravenous appetite for Nvidia's chips is the main reason that the company's stock price has increased so rapidly since early 2023. On Wednesday the shares closed at $207.04 with 24.3 billion shares outstanding, putting its market cap at $5.03 trillion.In comparison, Nvidia's value is greater than the GDP of India, Japan and the United Kingdom, according to the International Monetary Fund. Nvidia carved out an early lead in tailoring its chipsets known as graphics processing units, or GPUs, from use in powering video games to helping to train powerful AI systems, like the technology behind ChatGPT and image generators. Demand skyrocketed as more people began using AI chatbots. Tech companies scrambled for more chips to build and run them.

Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang has downplayed concerns of a bubble bursting, saying that the generative AI chatbots that were merely "interesting" when they first took hold a few years ago are now becoming so useful that they will be profitable. Huang was heading to South Korea this week as leaders from major Pacific Rim economies, including the United States, China and Japan, are gathering for the annual Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit that has long championed free trade but is now confronting sweeping U.S. tariffs on technology and other products.

The multilateral gathering in Gyeongju is expected to be overshadowed by a sideline event a face-to-face meeting on Thursday between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping as their intensifying trade war leaves the South Korean hosts in a difficult balancing act.

On Tuesday, Huang disclosed $500 billion in chip orders. The company also announced a partnership with Uber on robotaxis and a $1 billion investment in Nokia, with the two planning to work together on 6G technology.❑



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San Nicolas
Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Sta. Anna: Tel.586 8181
San Nicolas:
Aloe: Tel.584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	**100**
Oranjestad	**527 3140**
Noord	**527 3200**
Sta. Cruz	**527 2900**
San Nicolas	**584 5000**
Police Tipline	**11141**
Ambulancia	**911**
Fire Dept.	**115**
Red Cross	**582 2219**

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	**587 5900**
Prof. Taxi	**588 0035**
Taxi D.T.S.	**587 2300**
Taxi Serv. Aruba	**583 3232**
A1 Taxi Serv.	**280 2828**

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	**524 2424**
American Airlines	**582 2700**
Avianca	**588 0059**
Jet Blue	**588 2244**
Surinam	**582 7896**

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002

FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051

Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
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Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Phony AI-generated videos of Hurricane Melissa flood social media sites

By TAIMOOR SOBHAN and KELVIN CHAN
Associated Press

One viral video shows what appears to be four sharks swimming in a Jamaican hotel's pool as floodwaters allegedly brought on by Hurricane Melissa swamp the area. Another purportedly depicts Jamaica's Kingston airport completely ravaged by the storm. But neither of these events happened, it's just AI-generated misinformation circulating on social media as the storm churned across the Caribbean this week.

These videos and others have racked up millions of views on social media platforms, including X, TikTok and Instagram.

Some of the clips appear to be spliced together or based on footage of old disasters. Others appear to be created entirely by AI video generators.

"I am in so many WhatsApp groups and I see all of these videos coming. Many of them are fake," said Jamaica's Education Minister Dana Morris Dixon on Monday. "And so we urge you to please listen to the official channels."

Although it's common for hoax photos, videos and misinformation to surface during natural disasters, they're usually debunked quickly. But videos generated by new artificial intelligence tools have taken the problem to a new level by making it easy to create and spread realistic clips.

Waves splash in Kingston, Jamaica, as Hurricane Melissa approaches, Tuesday, Oct. 28, 2025.
Associated Press

In this case, the content has been showing up in social media feeds alongside genuine footage shot by local residents and news organizations, sowing confusion among social media users.

Here are a few steps you can take to reduce your chances of getting fooled.

Check for watermarks

Look for a watermark logo indicating that the video was generated by Sora, a text-to-video tool launched by ChatGPT-maker OpenAI, or other AI video generators. These will usually appear in one of the corners of a video or photo.

It is quite easy to remove these logos using third-party tools, so you can also check for blurs, pixelation or discoloration where a watermark should be.

Take a closer look

Look more closely at videos for unclear details. While the sharks-in-pool video appears realistic at first glance, it looks less believable upon closer examination because one of the sharks has a strange shape.

You might see objects that blend together, or details such as lettering on a sign that are garbled, which are telltale signs of AI-generated imagery. Branding is also something to look out for as many platforms are cautious about reproducing specific company logos.

Experts say it's going to get increasingly harder to tell the difference between reality and deepfakes as the technology improves.

Experts noted that Melissa is the first big natural disaster since OpenAI launched the latest version of its video generation tool Sora last month.

"Now, with the rise of easily accessible and powerful tools like Sora, it has become even easier for bad actors to create and distribute highly convincing synthetic videos," said Sofia Rubinson, a senior editor at NewsGuard, which analyzes online misinformation.

"In the past, people could often identify fakes through telltale signs like unnatural motion, distorted text, or missing fingers. But as these systems improve, many of those flaws are disappearing, making it increasingly difficult for the average viewer to distinguish AI-generated content from authentic footage."

Why create deepfakes around a crisis?

AI expert Henry Ajder said most of the hurricane deepfakes he's seen aren't inherently political. He suspects it's "much closer to more traditional kind of click-based content, which is to try and get engagement, to try and get clicks."

On X, users can get paid based on the amount of engagement their posts get. YouTubers can earn money from ads.

A video that racks up millions of views could earn the creator a few thousand dollars, Ajder said, not bad for the amount of effort needed.

Social media accounts also use videos to expand their follower base in order to promote projects, products or services, Ajder said.❑

Microsoft deploys a fix to Azure cloud service that's hit with outage

The logo of Microsoft is seen outside its French headquarters in Issy-les-Moulineaux, outside Paris on May 13, 2024.
Associated Press

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Microsoft has deployed a fix to address an outage of their Azure cloud portal that left users unable to access Office 365, Minecraft and other services.

The tech company wrote on its to its Azure status page that a configuration change to its Azure infrastructure caused the outage, and that its fix is being rolled out.

Microsoft didn't immediately respond to a request for comment, but the company acknowledged issues with its Azure Front Door, a global content and application delivery network, service on its status page and social media accounts.

Because so many sites and services use Microsoft's cloud service, an outage like this one can have widespread impact.

On Downdetector, a website that tracks online outages, users reported issues throughout the day with Office 365, Minecraft, XBox Live, Copilot, Costco, Starbucks, and many other services.

Alaska Airline wrote on its X account that the outage is at the heart of problems affecting their systems, including check-in services.

Microsoft's Azure troubles came just hours before the company was set to release its quarterly earnings report, and just over a week after a massive outage of Amazon's cloud computing service took down a broad range of online services, including social media, gaming, food delivery, streaming and financial platforms.❑

Marco Andretti retires from racing, ending an era for the Andretti family at the Indy 500

By JENNA FRYER
AP Auto Racing Writer

Marco Andretti said Wednesday he is retiring from racing, a decision that likely means the "Andretti Curse" at the Indianapolis 500 will never end.

The 38-year-old grandson of Mario Andretti announced on social media he will not attempt to enter the Indianapolis 500 next season and will instead turn his attention to his daughter, business ventures outside of racing, and a memoir in process called "Defending the Dynasty."

Next year's Indianapolis 500 will not have an Andretti in the field for the first time since 2005.

"I have had some really fun times behind the wheel in a lot of different types of racing cars a lot of great memories as well, mostly at the Indy 500," Marco Andretti wrote in his announcement, noting his start this year was the 20th of his career, good enough for 12th all-time.

"I am very much at peace with the next chapter in my life after dedicating three decades to the sport," he added.

Marco Andretti also reflected on the Indy 500, his performances there and when he and his father battled for the lead in the closing laps of the 2006 race.

ARCA driver Marco Andretti looks out of the garage before a practice run for an ARCA Mendards Series auto race Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024, at Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Associated Press

Marco Andretti was an IndyCar rookie, his father, Michael, came out of retirement to race against him, and Marco's late pass of Michael should have been enough for the victory. Sam Hornish Jr. ended up chasing down Marco Andretti and the curse that dates to 1970 the year after Mario Andretti gave the family their only Indy 500 win continued.

"I am proud of my overall stats at the Indy 500. I had six very legitimate shots at victory with Andretti Autosport and ended up with 20% top-3 finishes at the Speedway," Marco Andretti wrote. "It feels accomplishing to me to be able to retire having more podium finishes than my father Michael and the same as my grandfather Mario at the biggest race in the world."

He added to his Indy 500 memories nearly being bumped from the field in 2011 and winning the pole in 2020.

"That is what the Indianapolis 500 produces: extremes on both ends. That is why I love and appreciate it so much," he wrote.

Marco Andretti won two times over 253 IndyCar starts spanning 20 years. He debuted at the age of 19 driving for his father's team, which is now known as Andretti Global but Michael Andretti was bought out of the ownership group at the end of last season.

Marco Andretti scaled back in 2021 to run only the Indianapolis 500 as he dabbled in NASCAR and other racing series. With Michael Andretti no longer an official part of the team, new owner Dan Towriss is under no obligation to enter Marco Andretti at Indy.

Marco Andretti's final Indy 500 will go down as one of his worst he crashed on the fourth lap as both Mario and Michael Andretti dropped their heads at another Indy disaster.

Despite the heartbreak at Indianapolis, the Andretti name is one of the most globally respected in racing. Mario Andretti won the 1978 Formula 1 championship, IndyCar titles in 1965, 1966, 1969 and 1984, and the 1967 Daytona 500 in NASCAR.

Mario Andretti is the only driver to win Indy, Daytona and an F1 championship. He is the only driver to win IndyCar races in four different decades and his 52 career victories rank third on IndyCar's all-time list.❑

Manny Pacquiao hints at possible rematch with Floyd Mayweather

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Manny Pacquiao has hinted a rematch of his 2015 blockbuster with Floyd Mayweather Jr. could be on the cards next year.

"Right now we have a lot of negotiations about my next fight there's a possible rematch with Floyd Mayweather," Pacquiao told a news conference Wednesday.

"There's a lot of ongoing negotiations right now, so it's hard to plan what fight I'm going to post. I'm waiting for the final negotiation."

A world champion in eight divisions from flyweight to super welterweight, Pacquiao was enshrined in the International Boxing Hall of Fame in June.

A month later, he emerged from retirement and fell just short of regaining a title at the age of 46, with Mario Barrios retaining the WBC welterweight championship after a majority draw.

Pacquiao initially retired in 2021 with a record of 62-8-2 with 39 KOs, fighting in some of the biggest blockbusters of the 2000s. He said he'd always sought the toughest opponents so he could continue testing himself.

He also served his country as a senator from 2016-22.

Pacquiao lost to Mayweather in 2015 in a bout that had been billed as the "fight of century," but he later disclosed he'd been hampered by a shoulder injury.

"I'd love to have another fight, a rematch with Floyd Mayweather," Pacquiao said.

"So I hope that in the negotiations, we can understand each other and we can negotiate well."

Mayweather, 48, could be in for a busy 2026.

CSI Sports, the live boxing production company, last month announced an exhibition between unbeaten Mayweather and Mike Tyson next year. No date or site was provided in the announcement.

Manny Pacquiao poses on the scale during a ceremonial weigh in Friday, July 18, 2025, in Las Vegas.

Associated Press

In the meantime, Pacquiao will be focusing on the next generation.

His son, Jimuel Pacquiao, will make his pro debut against American Brendan Lally on Nov. 29 in California.

"I'm excited, but I'm worried about my son," the former senator said. "He started late but that is his passion, so I will support him.

I'm praying for him for a safe fight."❑

Better than gold? $100,000 for U.S. athletes who make the Winter Olympics and Paralympics

By EDDIE PELLS and STEPHEN WHYNO
AP Sports Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — The stakes for all these U.S. skiers, skaters, snowboarders and sliders over the next 100 days could not be more clear.

A chance for Olympic glory. A chance to compete for a gold medal.

And this year, for the first time, a chance to make $100,000. Thanks to a recent record $100 million donation to the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Foundation, athletes who make the U.S. Olympic or Paralympic teams starting next year in Milan-Cortina will be eligible to receive a $100,000 award when they retire. It's a game-changing piece of news for Olympic athletes, most of whom toil in obscurity outside of the two weeks the lights go on at the Games, and many of whom live in or near poverty: According to the foundation, some 57% of U.S. athletes earn $50,000 or less a year.

A general view shows Team USA Media Summit, on Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2025, in New York.
Associated Press

"At the age of 25, 26, I definitely was like: 'I can't do this to (my family) anymore. I can't continue living in my car. I have student loans. I have to get on with my life,'" said biathlete Deedra Irwin, who is now 33 and has made ends meet by everything from dog sitting to joining the Vermont National Guard.

Though Wednesday marked the 100-days-out point on the Olympic calendar, only a small slice of the approximately 225 Olympic and 65 Paralympic spots on Team USA in Italy have been locked up. The majority of those spots will be earned based on athletes' finishes in upcoming World Cup events being held across the globe over the next few months.

So, while many of these athletes have heard the stories about how the Olympics can change their lives usually through sponsorships, speaking engagements and talk-show appearances that spring from inspiring performances never before has the promise of cold hard cash been dangled quite like this. "As an athlete, you don't put into a 401K," Paralympian Oksana Masters said. "We don't have those traditional jobs of paying into that kind of stuff. It's about time that we've done this."

There are a few catches, mostly that the money will be divided into four payments and won't go into bank accounts until 20 years after the athletes retire, or when they reach 45 whichever comes later.

(The math is interesting for snowboarder Nick Baumgartner, who will be 44 next year and hopes to extend his career through Salt Lake City in 2034.)❑